

BOOK REVIEW

Conservation of Birdwing Butterflies, edited by Don Sands and Sue Scott. November 2002. SciComEd & THECA, Brisbane; 48 pp, softback. ISBN 0 646 41898 X. Available from SciComEd, 2 Emily Street, Marsden, Qld 4132. Price A\$22 + p/h (\$4 within Australia, \$10 overseas).

This full-colour booklet encompasses various aspects of the biology and conservation of several birdwing butterfly species in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Taiwan. It includes contributions from Tim New (*Birdwing butterfly conservation: does it have wider values?*), Don Sands (*The food plants of the birdwing larvae*), Sue Scott (*School and community participation in the Richmond Birdwing butterfly conservation project*), Brian Fletcher (*The Paradise Birdwing, Ornithoptera paradisea Staudinger, with special reference to the nominotypical subspecies from the Madang Province of Papua New Guinea*), Yaw-Long Yang & Huai-Sheng Fang (*The conservation status of birdwing butterflies in Taiwan*) and Don Sands & Sue Scott (*The Richmond Birdwing butterfly (Ornithoptera richmondia [Gray]): its natural history and progress towards recovery*).

Although designed primarily as a non-scientific introduction to the subject of birdwing butterfly conservation and biology, there is much of interest to the more specialised reader. Current information on the status of conservation projects involving several species is welcome and the numerous illustrations of adults, early stages and larval food plants complement an easily readable text. Of especial interest are the sections detailing the rediscovery and biology of *O. p. paradisea*, feared extinct for many years, and the biology and conservation of *O. richmondia*.

There are a few minor glitches which do not detract from the overall interest of this book. The distribution of *Lamproptera* spp. (page 6) should include southern China to the Philippines and much of Indonesia, that of *Ornithoptera* and *Troides* (map, page 7) should include the Moluccas and Louisiades (*Ornithoptera*) and western India to Sri Lanka (*Troides*), while the northernmost population of *O. paradisea flavescens* (map, page 24) should be labelled *O. p. tarunggarensis* [although the name of this population is debatable, it does not belong in *flavescens*; similarly, lowland populations around Manokwari do not belong in *arfakensis* - see Hancock 1982]. The distribution of *Aristolochia acuminata* (page 16) should include Madagascar, where the local troidine *Atrophaneura antenor* feeds on it.

The price for this informative and profusely illustrated book is very reasonable and I thoroughly recommend it to anyone with an interest in birdwing butterflies in particular and conservation in general.

Reference

HANCOCK, D.L. 1982. A note on the status of *Ornithoptera meridionalis tarunggarensis* (Joicey and Talbot) (Lepidoptera: Papilionidae). *Australian Entomological Magazine* 8(6): 93-95.